

Congressman Jesse Jackson, Jr., today said, "The Bush Administration may be the most secretive government in U.S. history. Today's revelation in *USA Today* that the National Security Agency (NSA) has been secretly 'call-tracking' millions of

*American*

citizens, and has accumulated the largest domestic database in history, should give members of Congress and every American pause.

*USA Today*

reported that NSA's goal is 'to create a database of every call ever made' in the United States. It should force us to reflect on what our government is doing

*to*

us. The President and others in his Administration give us assurances that no laws have been broken and no one's rights have been violated. But why should we trust the word of an administration that has shown itself to be so untrustworthy on so many other matters, including but no limited to, Iraq?

"This secret gathering of phone numbers is a witch hunt of the worst order, assumes that all 300 million Americans are potential terrorists, and may be a violation of the Constitution's Fourth Amendment. This is a totally un-American legal concept. It assumes guilty until proven innocent, instead of innocent until proven guilty. President Bush earlier assured the American people that the NSA was only intercepting *international* calls, but now we know it is 'call-tracking' *domestic* phone numbers that can easily have other detailed personal information attached to it - and we don't even know who all has this information. This is a continuation down a slippery slope, and we don't know

*where*

it will stop.

"The public's lack of knowledge about this situation - like so many other issues - reflects a lack of government oversight by a Republican-controlled Congress. Today's revelation should virtually guarantee that General Michael Hayden, who was in charge of the NSA from March 1999 to April 2005, is denied confirmation as the new Director of the Central Intelligence Agency - unless a much fuller explanation of this situation is made known.

"While AT&T, Verizon and BellSouth have contracted with the NSA to provide this information, the communications company Qwest refused to turn over its records after it 'asked NSA to take its proposal to the FISA court' and the agency refused. It would be interesting to track the political contributions of these companies to see if there is any connection between their contributions and their cooperation. Finally, as more and more keeps leaking out, I wonder what other questionable things - without warrants - this administration is doing?" Jackson concluded.